

Indiana Principal Leadership Academy

SPECIAL EDITION

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Dr. Suellen Reed, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Restructuring Kindergarten: Making Schools Ready for Children

Opportunities will abound when the 1999 Indiana General Assembly convenes in January. Given the \$2 billion state surplus, our policymakers will have the rare opportunity, not only to implement sizeable tax reductions, but to invest additional resources in the state's most precious and important commodity -- Hoosier children. Positive K-12 education policy should be at the top of every legislator's priority list, and the highest priority should be changes in the law governing kindergarten. The Indiana Department of

Education will request changing the enrollment cut-off date from June 1 to September 1, and providing school corporations the financial support to make optional full-day kindergarten available the highest of all priorities.

In the last few years, there have been significant findings in the area of brain research. Scientists have found that the first 10-12 years of life are the most significant in terms of brain development. For many Indiana children, kindergarten is the first opportunity they have for the kind of essential early education experiences necessary for this development. While many children benefit from stimulating home environments, other children lack vital opportunities in the early years. Research (Gullo, 1986; Cryan, 1992, etc.) has shown that quality full-day kindergarten programs can result in academic and social benefits for children. While there are costs associated with early childhood education, there are also long-term fiscal and societal benefits that result from offering these opportunities to children earlier.

Costs

Implementing optional full-day kindergarten will give school corporations more tools with which to deliver effective early education opportunities. Any full-day kindergarten policy adopted by the legislature should ensure that parents have the option to enroll their children and schools have an option of when, and if, they make a transition to full-day programming. Research on full-day kindergarten programs strongly supports the benefits of this policy. This research suggests that full-day kindergartners exhibited more independent learning, classroom involvement, productivity in work with peers and reflectiveness than half-day kindergartners. Moreover, children in full-day programs tended to exhibit more positive behaviors than did pupils in half-day or alternate-day programs. Researchers have found a positive relationship between participation in full-day kindergarten and later school performance.

We have found that, due to changing social and economic trends, many parents who are given the option prefer full-day kindergarten, because it reduces the number of transitions kindergartners face in a typical day.

We are encouraging the change in the entrance date because Indiana has, by far, the earliest kindergarten entrance date in the nation, and that means thousands of children are not eligible for kindergarten until they are six years old. The next closest state is Missouri with August 1. Twenty-four states have an enrollment date established in the
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Restructuring Kindergarten: Making Schools Ready for Children

(continued from front cover)

month of September. Indiana law leaves many five-year-olds with nowhere to go for quality education experiences. While some of these children have a stay-at-home parent, most spend their days in other child-care arrangements.

The current entrance law takes away a year of vital experiences for these young children. Having disadvantaged children spend an extra year in less than stimulating environments likely will put them even farther behind their peers who have access to quality education. Only about one-fourth of eligible children are served by Head Start. Typically, Head Start only serves children through age four.

Emerging research clearly indicates that a child's earliest years are the most critical in terms of brain development. These are the wonder years of learning, and we must not waste this window of opportunity for learning.

National early childhood experts have encouraged the date change and describe Indiana's current Kindergarten Entrance Law as the approach not to be taken.

Instruction/Prevention Remedial

I have heard from a number of kindergarten teachers who want the date to remain at June 1. However, the reason many of these teachers give for supporting June 1 is pressure they feel to teach in a way that is not developmentally appropriate. If a kindergarten curriculum does not meet the needs of five-year-olds, then the appropriateness of the curriculum needs to be questioned. A developmentally appropriate curriculum is based on research of child development, how children learn, and the strengths and needs of individual children. The Indiana State Board of Education states that "the Kindergarten curriculum shall include developmentally appropriate activities" in all areas of instruction (511 IAC 6.1-5-1). It is very important that those of us in leadership positions support this kind of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that best meets the needs of young children.

The focus needs to shift from "children being ready for school" to "schools being ready for

children." If a kindergarten curriculum does not meet the needs of five-year-olds, then the appropriateness of the curriculum needs to be questioned. A developmentally appropriate curriculum is based on research of child development, how children learn and the strengths and needs of individual children. The Indiana State Board of Education rules state that "the kindergarten curriculum shall include developmentally appropriate activities" in all areas of instruction (511 IAC 6.1-5-1).

Changing the entrance date will not force any children to attend school earlier, but will welcome children who turn five in June, July and August. It is up to parents to make the decision about when to enroll their child. Since kindergarten is not mandatory in Indiana, compulsory education does not begin until the year of the child's seventh birthday.

On behalf of the children and their need for positive educational experiences at an early age, I ask you to please support these important changes in Indiana school law.

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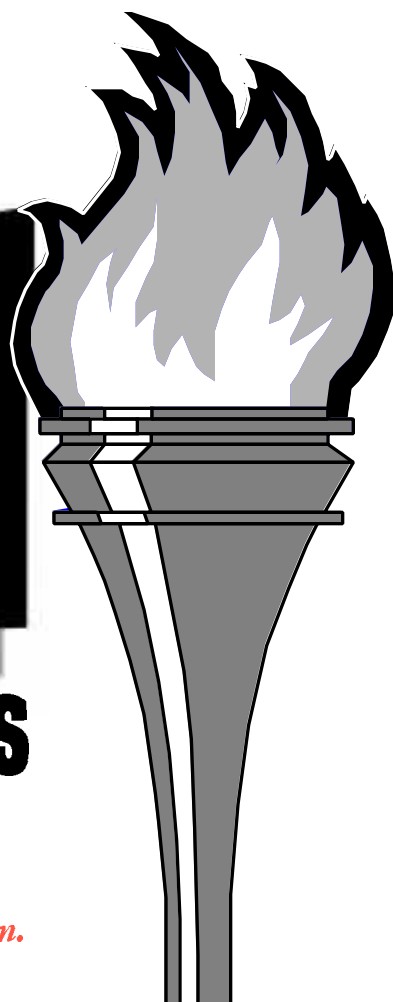
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

CHAMPION
STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPALS

9th Annual Winter Conference

January 25-26, 1999

See registration form on inside back cover for more information.



EXTRAordinary People

by Deb Lecklider, Executive Director, IPLA and
Kelly Hannon, Program Director, IPLA

*"Leaders can accomplish little without understanding
and engaging the qualities of the heart."*

Daniel Goleman, *Leader to Leader*, Fall 1998

At the end of September, a significant event occurred which will enable the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy to strategically plan for the future of school leadership and ultimately the best possible professional development for principals. A diverse team consisting of business representatives, legislators and educators met for two days in Indianapolis to begin looking at what school leaders will look like in order to meet the future needs of students. This meeting, the Blue Ribbon Design Team, was our first step. Next, action teams will be established to elaborate on current proficiencies and curriculum which will guide us into the 21st Century.



Blue Ribbon Design Team Participants: Dr. H. Dean Evans, Former Governor Robert Orr, Jim Ellsberry and Dr. Gary Phillips.

During the two days we spent studying leadership and the implications for our students, we had the opportunity to meet several students and their teacher from Chauncey Rose Middle School in Terre Haute. Mrs. Marilyn Leinenbach, who received the 1998 American Teacher Award from the Disney Company in Mathematics, engaged her students in a discussion on the importance of school leadership and allowed us the privilege of observing. I thought you would be interested in knowing the perspectives of middle school age

children in regards to leadership and what we, as school leaders and adults, can do to help them prepare for their futures. (Perspectives recorded by Jim Ellsberry, President, DeWitt Institute.)

Mrs. Leinenbach: What can our school do to get you ready for the future?

Students: Teach us self-discipline and self-esteem. Help us develop organizational skills. Give us a head start on planning for our future (career, family, etc.). Teach us leadership skills.

Mrs. Leinenbach: What qualities does an effective principal have?

Students: Patient, kind, generous. Has discipline (maintains good discipline). Makes people feel special.

Mrs. Leinenbach: You are describing Mr. Tanoos (former principal, now Interim Superintendent, Vigo County School Corporation). Very visible, very active, patient, makes students be responsible, believes in self-discipline, teaches others to be leaders, allows you to make mistakes and show you how to be a better person, fun, active in the community, honest.

Mrs. Leinenbach: What would be included in an ideal school?

Students: More one-to-one interactions between teachers and students. Advanced classes to prepare you for college. More field trips, hands-on community-based learning. Learning things that apply to your life after school.

Mrs. Leinenbach: What would be (make for) a perfect leader?

Students: Have Mr. Tanoos in every school! Lay down the rules clearly and enforce them! Learning done in a climate of trust and caring. Would not

permit put-downs or aggressive, negative behavior.

Margaret Mead said, "We are now at a point where we must educate our children in what no one knew yesterday, and prepare our schools for what no one knows yet." This is quite applicable in regards to technology and the evolving skills required for the workplace. However, as indicated in the quotes of the Chauncey Rose students, the qualities of a leader they feel are most important are those that we all possess: kindness, caring, patience. After listening to the students talk about their former principal Danny Tanoos, it is evident that he captured the hearts of his students and staff by possessing these qualities and more.

Let us rise to the challenge of preparing students for life as John F. Kennedy said, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future." While we seek the advice of knowledgeable people, let us not forget to continue to ask the children what is important to them, what it is that they need. For, inevitably, we will hear the sentiments of the Chauncey Rose students echoed in the year 2020 and beyond. They want generosity, love, forgiveness...qualities of the heart.



Clockwise from Back Left: A.J. Patton, Paul Thompson, Superintendent Daniel Tanoos, Teacher Marilyn Leinenbach, Rachel Weaver, Lauren Mardis and Jessyka Haton - Chauncey Rose Middle School.

LEADERSHIP

Heart Leadership: Making a Difference for Children

by Don Setterlof, Group II - Principal, Cherry Tree Elementary School (Carmel, IN)

P rincipals that provide **Heart Leadership** will **make the greatest difference for all children**. This leadership is demonstrated by **the courage** that is needed to stand up for what is right; **a strong commitment** that inspires a sense of loyalty, confidence, trust and respect; **and compassion**, which lives out the mission that **principals do make the greatest difference for children**.

In a true learning organization, children receiving effective instruction to engage in optimal learning must be our highest priority. Professional organizations such as IPLA are invaluable in providing the skill building and professional development opportunities for principals to effectively meet this challenge. However, principals can not achieve this goal alone. It is imperative that we develop a close working relationship with all stakeholders of a child's education.



Increasing parent involvement and providing meaningful parent training opportunities can and do make a difference for kids. Leadership means making this a priority and leading the charge of helping parents learn how to help their children. Community support will come by valuing and actively partnering to keep the community informed about what the schools are striving to accomplish for children. Principals must also reach out and take advantage of opportunities to participate in local, state and federal levels of political activities.

The image of the principalship is at stake right now, and we must be an advocate and spokesperson for the importance of the principal's position as a reflective practitioner and leader of leaders. Principals must provide the leadership to preserve the integrity and coherence of the educational programs while assuring that the best interests of the children and their parents remain the highest priority.

The challenge of **Heart Leadership** is to:

1

Stay Informed

Only those who stay current and who retool their professional skills can truly make a difference in children's lives.

4

Be Willing to be Held Accountable

Decisions and priorities do impact the ability of students and teachers to achieve high standards of performance. Principals who make a difference for kids can not shy away from accountability.

2

Exert Strong Leadership

Principals must support, facilitate and implement changes that promote academic achievement for all children.

5

Include all Stakeholders in Planning and Decisions

Leadership must come from all levels of the school community.

3

Be Ready to Accept Increased Responsibilities

More and more policy and critical decisions are being made at the building level. The best environment for improvement is one in which the principal and staff make decisions and implement programs on their own.

**HEART LEADERSHIP WILL
MAKE THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE
FOR ALL CHILDREN**



Media Management: A Principal Imperative

by Dr. Steve Green, National Director
Pacesetter Program - The College Board

There was a time when an elementary or secondary school principal could rest assured that he or she would be fully insulated from the aggressive, almost invasive, pressure from the media. Hot-button educational issues such as test scores, school violence, personnel matters, etc. could be easily deferred to the central office and handled by either the superintendent and/or his public relations staff. Not!

Today more than ever, the media plead ignorance to any boundaries when it comes to getting to the heart of a story. Armed with the first amendment to the constitution, "the public's right to know," and the age of information (electronic and print media), representatives are prepared to do whatever it takes to get as close as possible to the action and the source of any potential story's essence. Nowadays, for example, if a shooting occurs at your school, news reporters will be more than happy to talk to the superintendent and the media relations staff person at the central office, but any interview with these officials will more than likely occur well after the reporters have left your school and have spoken with you, respective parents, teachers and members of the community about the incident. Two of the fundamental characteristics of the information age are (1) the rapid transfer of information and (2) the immediacy of its presentation. Therefore, when news unfolds, (particularly that which is crisis in nature), the media will be obsessed with getting to the incident's point of origin, which in most cases is your school.

Given the current climate of the public's thirst for immediate information and the media's intense desire to quench that thirst, it is imperative that all principals recognize the importance of being prepared to exhibit "grace under pressure" when the microphone is live and the camera is on. On the one hand, improperly handling something so simple as a thirty-second interview, could result in your colleagues, teachers, parents and community representatives losing confidence in your capacity to exhibit effective leadership in the midst of a crisis. On the other hand, exhibiting composure and preparedness in the same thirty-second interview enhances your credibility among all constituents tremendously.

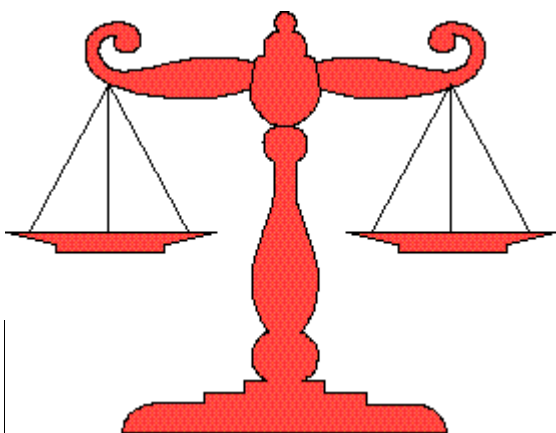
Therefore, it is important that all principals have a crisis management plan, and management of the media should be an essential component of the crisis management plan. It is equally important that the plan be

reviewed, revised and rehearsed on a regular basis. Principals who are not practicing this approach, should start immediately. Principals who are practicing this approach should continue without hesitation.

Whatever your situation is, here are a few tips to guide your preparation process when the microphone is live and the camera lens opens:

1. **Anticipate the questions a reporter is likely to ask.**
2. **Rehearse possible responses with emphasis on key points you have in mind.**
3. **Mention the most important points first.**
4. **Be poised and confident as you receive questions and respond to them.**
5. **Be concise in your responses but avoid being terse.**
6. **Be honest at all times. Your career depends on it.**
7. **Use vocal variety. Raise and lower your voice according to the content of your message.**
8. **Build in a cut-off with answers you wish to drop, (i.e., "I'll answer one more question on this topic." Or "There are two points I wish to make in response to your question; I am not at liberty to discuss any matters beyond this.")**

I hope these tips will be helpful to you and your staff. Good luck and remember, "The Microphone is Always Live and the Camera Never Blinks."



The IPLA Alumni Association featured Dave Emmert, General Counsel of the Indiana School Boards Association, in Regional "Roundtable" meetings. Over 225 administrators attended the meetings in Greenwood, Carmel, New Albany and Elkhart. The following are highlights from those meetings. Information is not to be viewed as legal advice.

School Law Updates

Many thanks to Dave Emmert and the following Roundtable hosts for making our first set of regional meetings a success.

Roundtable Sites

Greenwood

**Pleasant Grove Elementary School
Roger Micnerski, Principal**

Carmel

**Carmel Clay Educational
Service Center
Cherry Tree Elementary School
Don Setterlof, Principal**

New Albany

**Hazelwood Jr. High School
Jackie Apple, Principal**

Elkhart

**Concord High School
Robert Staley, Principal
Ellen Stevens, Associate Principal**

First Amendment speech rights of students as applied to the use of web sites... Students have free speech rights in relation to publishing information on web sites. However, students can be disciplined through school if the information poses a threat of substantial disruption within the school.

Fourth Amendment search rights...

- Students can be tested for drugs if they participate in extra-curricular activities and a random testing policy is initiated.
- To search a student, one must have reasonable suspicion that a particular student is involved in the infraction and the search must be reasonable in scope.

Compulsory attendance as applied to home-schooled children...

- Students can participate in extra-curricular activities with the permission of the superintendent and/or school board.
- Home school students can be considered transfer students when withdrawing from school for home schooling.

1997 amendments to IDEA covering the 45-day interim alternative educational placement of disabled students who bring weapons or drugs to school require action by the case conference committee to implement.

School corporation and administrator liability for student-to-student and employee-to-student sexual harassment. A principal must investigate if he/she has reason to know of any potential sexual harassment situation.

A school administrator may suspend a teacher with pay without prior due process, with notice and a hearing provided at later date, when student safety issues exist, like sexual harassment.

Schools have the ability to dismiss contracted, non-certified employees for one instance of threatening and abusive language toward another employee.

Schools may be held liable when students are injured due to seat belts in vans not being in working order. Drivers should be instructed to request all passengers to wear their seat belts.

A Delaware court has recognized that schools have the ability to expel a student for dealing in drugs off of school property, on a weekend or during the summer.

Student due process hearings must permit the student to respond, explain and defend the charges against the student.

9TH ANNUAL IPLA ALUMNI WINTER CONFERENCE Registration Form



January 25-26, 1999
 “Champion Standards for Principals”
 Sheraton Indianapolis North Hotel
 (former Radisson Plaza & Suite Hotel)

Featuring
 “An Evening at The Children’s Museum”
 January 25, 1999
 (included with conference registration)

Name _____ IPLA Group Number _____
 Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 School _____
 School Phone _____

Check All That Apply	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> YES, I will be attending the 9th Annual IPLA Alumni Winter Conference!	
Conference Registration for IPLA Alumni Association Members	\$99.00 x _____ = \$ _____
Conference Registration and Membership for IPLA Graduates	\$109.00 x _____ = \$ _____
Conference Registration for Guest Administrators	\$129.00 x _____ = \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I will be bringing a guest to “An Evening at The Children’s Museum” on January 25.	
Additional charge for each guest	\$15.00 x _____ = \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I will be bringing a guest to breakfast on January 26.	
Additional charge for each guest	\$15.00 x _____ = \$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____	

Please make checks payable to IPLA Alumni Association, Inc.

Mail your registration form **NO LATER THAN JANUARY 8, 1999** to:
 IPLA Alumni Association, Attention Ruth-Anne Herber, Indiana Principal Leadership Academy
 Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798.
 Phone (317) 232-9004 Fax (317) 232-9005

What's Happening at IPLA

January 25-26, 1999

**IPLA Alumni Association
Winter Conference**
Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis

February 10-12 & 15-16, 1999

Academy Sessions
Group 29 (2/10-12),
Group 30 (2/10-11) and
Groups 31 & 32 (2/15-16)
Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis

April 12-15 & 19-20, 1999

Academy Sessions
Group 30 (4/13-15),
Groups 31 & 32 (4/19-20) and
Group 33 (4/12-14)
Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis

June 21-24, 1999

**Summer Team
Building Institute**
Nashville, Indiana

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